MIKOLA TRUBLAINI

Little Natalochka and the Silver Fish

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A Fairy Tale

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Про дівчинку Наталочку та сріблясту рибку

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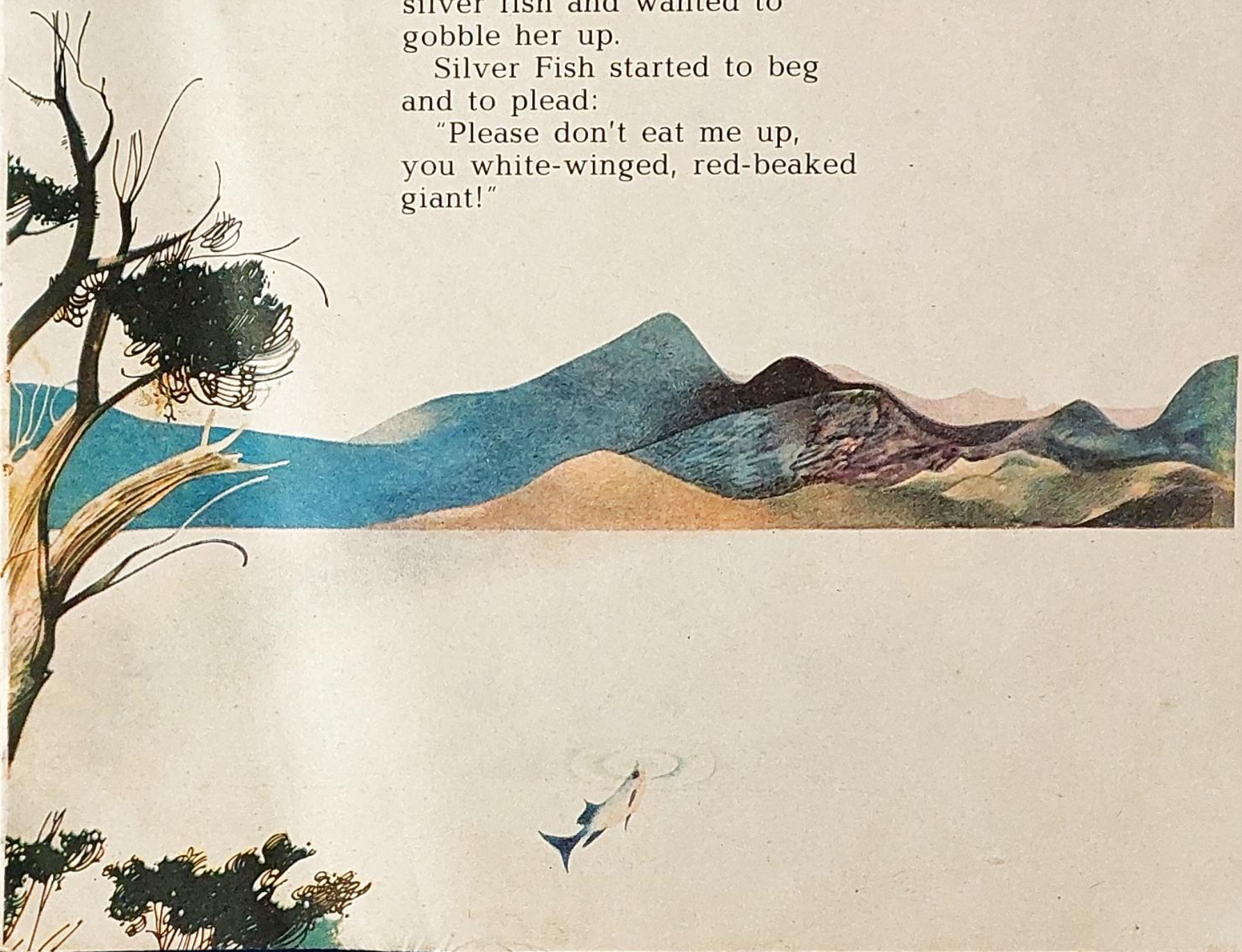
Once upon a time there lived a little silver fish in a mountain lake. At the same lake also dwelled a large white swan with a long neck and a mighty beak. Once the swan came across the silver fish and wanted to gobble her up.

Silver Fish started to beg and to plead:

"Please don't eat me up, you white-winged, red-beaked giant!"



To which Swan said:

"All right, I won't. But you must find me a pair of shoes, because my feet are freezing in the water. If you find them for me, I won't eat you up, but if you don't, that'll be the end of you."

Silver Fish swam rapidly all about the lake in search of a pair of shoes for Swan. No matter where she went, even down to the bottom of the lake, she could not find any shoes for Swan.

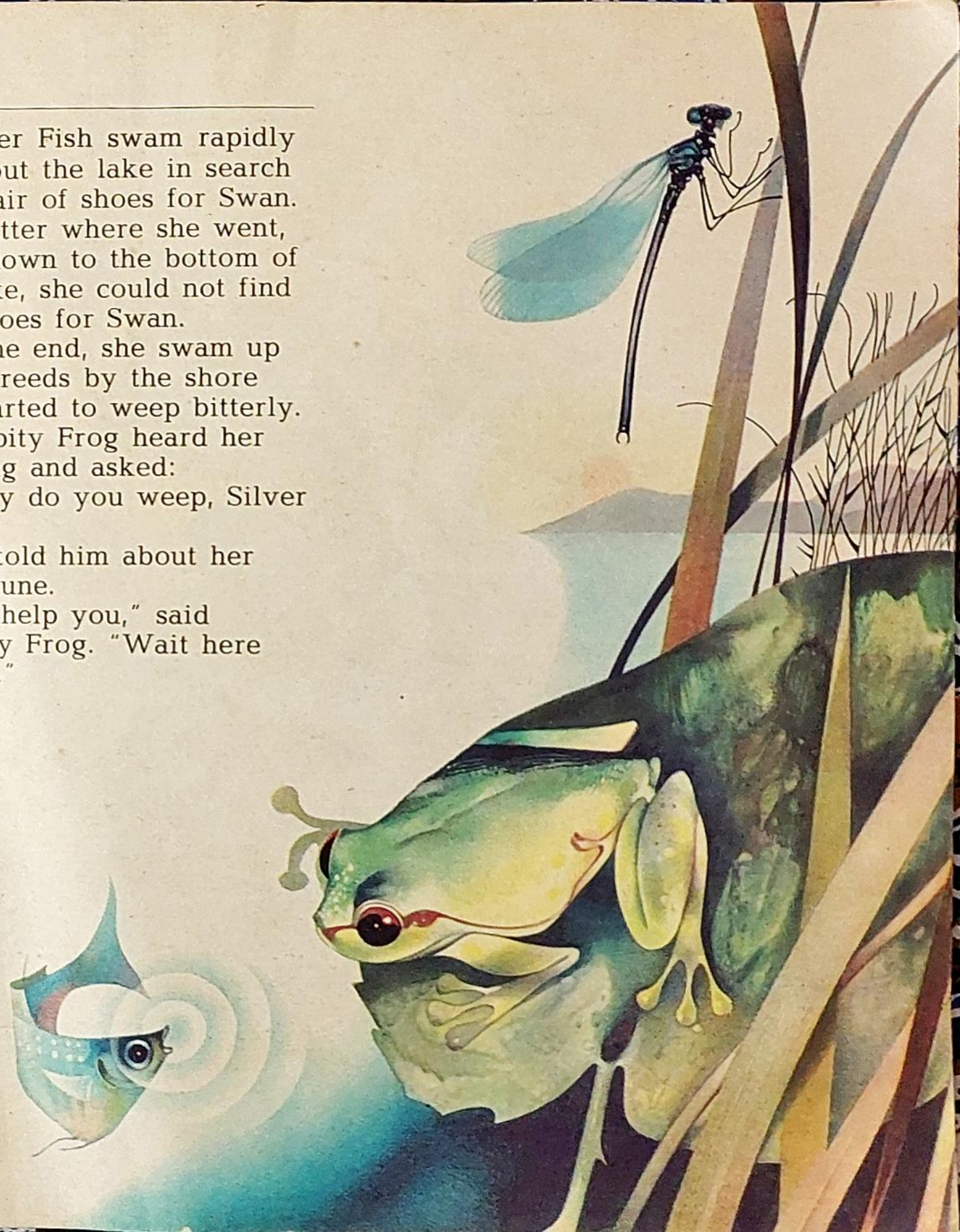
In the end, she swam up to the reeds by the shore and started to weep bitterly.

Hoppity Frog heard her weeping and asked:

"Why do you weep, Silver Fish?"

She told him about her misfortune.

"I'll help you," said Hoppity Frog. "Wait here for me."



He left Silver Fish in the reeds, hopped onto the shore, and started croaking:

"Croak-croak, croak-croak, croak-croak!"

Dandy Sparrow, who was sitting in a tall willow tree, heard the call and asked:

"Chirp-chirp, chirp-chirp, what's happened?"

Hoppity Frog told Dandy Sparrow about the misfortune of Silver Fish and asked him to help get the shoes.

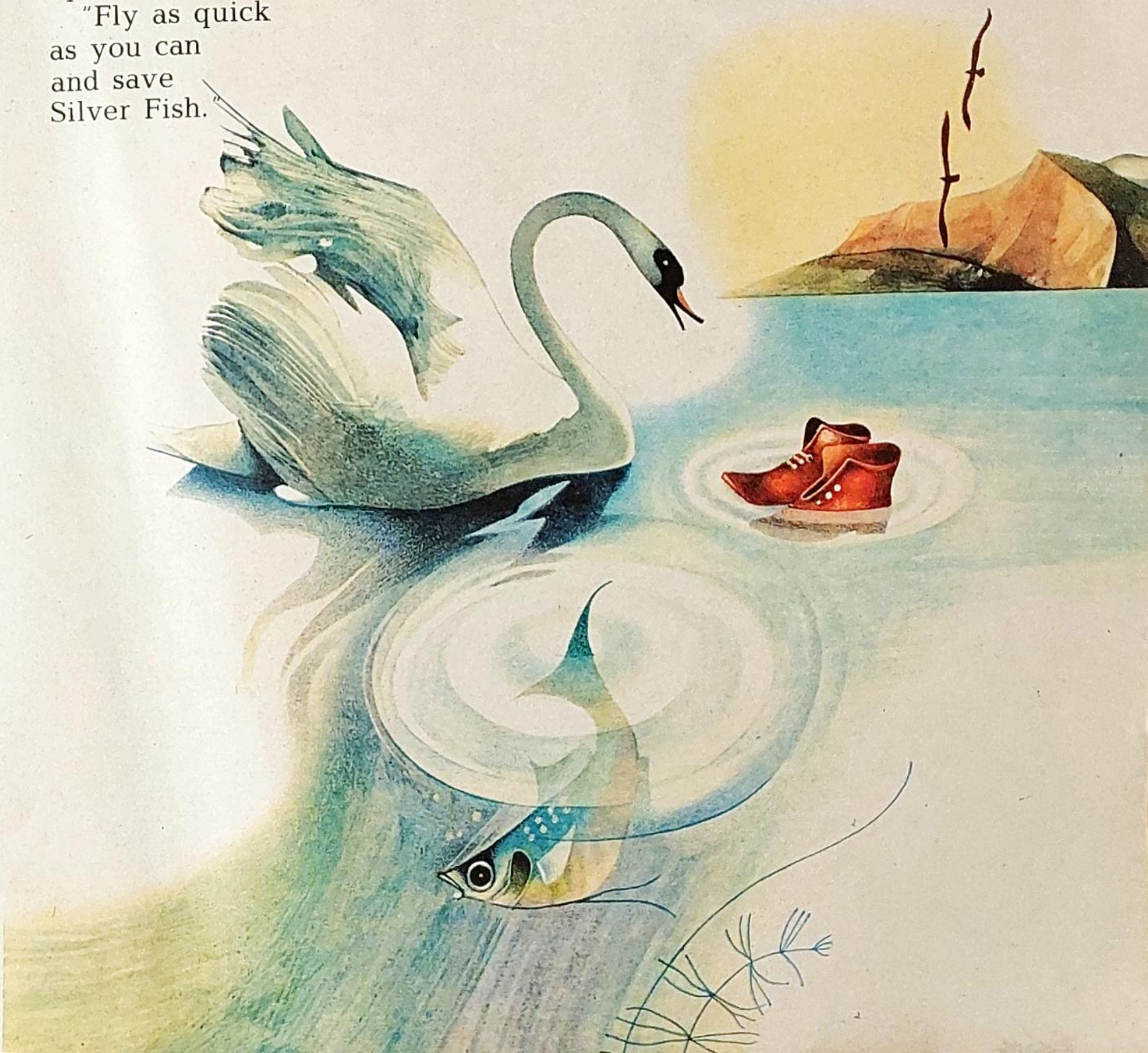
Dandy Sparrow fluttered off into the garden where

a little girl named Natalochka was playing just then.

No sooner did Natalochka hear that Swan wanted to gobble up Silver Fish than

she brought out her beautiful red shoes and said to Dandy Sparrow:

"Fly as quick as you can and save Silver Fish."



Dandy Sparrow darted away and gave the shoes to Hoppity Frog who dived into the lake and brought them to Silver Fish. How overjoyed she was. Immediately she brought them to Swan who was so pleased to have those

shoes that he promised
Silver Fish never ever
to touch her again.

Silver Fish told Hoppity
Frog about it.

Hoppity Frog retold it to
Dandy Sparrow.

And Dandy Sparrow
brought the good news
to Natalochka.

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